Auction of lustre-lost wheat

5300. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PU3LIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have floated open tender to auction lustre-lost quality of wheat currently held in FCI buffers;

(b) if so, whether the flour millers of the North and of Andhra Pradesh have been barred from bidding; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) (a) Yes, sir.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. In view of the fact that procurement of wheat is currently being undertaken in the Northern Region, the FC! called tenders from bidders in the non-procuring States alone to prevent any chance of recycling. Roller Flour Mills of Andhra Pradesh have not been barred from bidding for wheat.

Revamping PDS

5301. SHRI B. J. PANDA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Public Distribution System is corruption-ridden and there is an immediate need to streamline and revamp it;

(b) if so, the action plan devised by Government to make the system complaint-free and people-friendly; and

(c) the number of complaints received, the number of cases where grievances were redressed, the number of cases still pending and the number of corrupt officials booked for action during the last two years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK

PRADHAN); (a) and (b) Public Distribution is implemented under the joint responsibility of the Centra! and State Governments. The Central Government is res: 'or procurement, storage and transportation of the PDS commodities upto the Central godowns and making them available to the States. The responsibility for distribution to the consumers through the fair price shops and administration of the PDS rests with the State Governments and UT administrations. In an operation of such a vast magnitude involving multiple agencies including 4 63 lakh Fair Price Shops (FPS) in the country, the possibility of irregularities cannot be ruled out. However, in order to make the PDS most effective, efficient and accountable, following measures have been initiated:—

(I) The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 was notified on 31 8.2001 under section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The salient features of the Order relate to:

(i) proper identification of eligible families,

(ii) issue of ration cards.

(iii) licensing of fair price shops,

(iv) scale of issue and issue price,

(v) distribution of essential commodities, and

(vi) monitoring.

Any contravention of the clauses 3,4,6 & 7 of the Order is punishable under section 7 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

(II) State Governments have been requested to closely monitor PDS at the FPS and other levels and to make arrangements for distribution of PDS commodities in a transparent and accountable manner by involving Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the rural areas and local bodies in urban area.

(Ill) A Model Citizens' Charter has been formulated and circulated to all States/UTs in the country, as a measure of social audit.

(c) The number of complaints receive in the Ministry (State-wise) during the last 2 years is as under:

SI. No.	State/UT	Year 2000	Year 2001
1.	Andhra Pradesh	-	2
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	-	2
3.	Assam	-	3
4.	Bihar	16	22
5.	Chhattisgarh	-	2
6.	Delhi	14	16
7.	Gujarat	-	5
8.	Haryana	5	11
9.	Himachal Pradesh	4	20
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	-	2
11.	Jharkhand	-	2
12.	Karnataka	-	1
13.	Kerala	1	-
14.	Madhya Pradesh	3	16
15.	Maharashtra	2	12
16.	Orissa	-	2
17.	Punjab	2	18
18.	Rajasthan	14	3
19.	Uttar Pradesh	24	24
20.	Uttaranchal	-	3
21.	West Bengal	-	8
22.	A & N Islands	-	1
23.	D&N Haveli	-	2
24.	Chandigarh	1	•
	TOTAL	86	177

Complaints received by the Government from public mostly relate to non-availability and irregular supply of PDS items at FPS, overcharging by the FPS owners and black marketing of PD^ commodities Such complaints generally involve criminal offence and have been forwarded to concerned State Governments/UT Administrations for appropriate action.

In case the charges of the complaints are substantiated, the State Government take suitable action under the law. Figures regarding number of corrupt officials booked for action are not maintained by the Government of India.

BIS Hallmark Scheme on Ornaments/Jewellery

5302. SHRI ABANI ROY.Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(d) whether according to a survey conducted by BIS it has been found that most of the jewellers in the country are cheating the consumers in sale of ornaments etc.;

(e) if so, whether Government propose to compulsorily enforce BIS Hallmark Scheme on ornaments/jewellery sold by jewellers in the country; and

(a) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) recently conducted a survey in some of the major cities of the country. Out of 120 samples of jewellery tested, only 14 samples were found to be of the claimed purity.

(b) and (c) There is no such proposal under consideration, as at present conditions are not appropriate.

Unutilized Foodgrains of FCI Godowns

5303. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that substantial quantity of foodgrains remain unutilized in the FCI godowns; and

(b) if so, whether Government would consider revision of issue price of foodgrains to increase offtake?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN):(a)Yes, Sir.